

The Best Bowling Tip I've Ever Received

By Michael Manolis



When I went to the American Bowling Congress Tournament in Reno this year, I was in a pretty bad slump. I was suffering from nagging physical injuries and felt awkward and unbalanced at the line.

I decided to take one of the C.A.T.S. (Computer Aided Tracking System) lessons to see if it could shed some light on my situation. The video produced from this lesson pointed out several problems in my game.

I was way too far back on the approach, and this was causing me to slide too far and fall off shots. Moving up on the approach fixed this issue, but there were other problems as well.

The instructor recommended that I stop forcing the ball in my swing. The video analysis showed me pulling the ball *up* in my backswing. This is something that I have always done—it was my natural swing.

For several weeks, I fought to get an un-muscled free swing and just threw the ball worse and worse. I felt like I lost all power and control. My track dropped two inches, and it was like I was spinning the ball now. I was a mess and in a worse situation than before I left for Reno.

I talked to area pro Rich Wolfe, and he told me to stop by his shop and he would go over the video with me. We looked at my video and compared it with various PBA Tour players. I had never really looked at these players' swings in detail but doing so shed a lot of light on my situation.

Rich pointed out that a lot of these top-level players muscle the ball in some way or another. It's hard to start with the ball at waist level and have it end above your head at the top of the backswing with no help applied to it. I certainly was helping the ball, but I was *jerking* it back. The pros I watched, however, were simply walking through their swings.

We worked on relaxing my grip and letting the swing flow and build to my release. It ended up being a simple fix to my swing that I would have never resolved without Rich's help.

Best tip I have ever received—I got back my confidence and was able to bowl out of my slump.

Two weeks after meeting with Wolfe, Manolis captured the scratch all events title at this year's NCABA Championship Tournament at Dale City and Alexandria with a 2,233 total on series of 732, 792, and 709—a 248.11 average. As a result, he served as the association's representative in the 55th annual ABC Masters in Milwaukee, Wis., October 27-31.

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